

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
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R 301619Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7169
INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

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SUBJECT: NEGOTIATIONS IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG METAL
INDUSTRY MOVING SLOWLY WHILE STRIKE AND LOCKOUTS ARE
CONTINUING

REF: BONN 5491
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PAGE 02 BONN 05722 301647Z

SUMMARY: THE STRIKE AND LOCKOUTS IN THE NORTH BADEN-
WUERTTEMBERG METAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY COVERING OVER
230,000 WORKERS ARE CONTINUING. NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ARE
STILL CONCENTRATED ON CLAUSES TO GUARANTEE EMPLOYMENT
AND WAGE LEVELS IN THE CASE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES
ARE MOVING SLOWLY. THE WAGE ISSUE HAS NOT YET BEEN

DISCUSSED, BUT THE UNION LEADERSHIP HAS INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH A 5.3 PERCENT PAY INCREASE, THUS REFERRING TO A CONCILIATION PROPOSAL FOR THE LOWER SAXONY METAL INDUSTRY WHICH WAS ACCEPTED BY THE UNION BUT REJECTED BY THE EMPLOYERS. END SUMMARY.

1. BOTH THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE METALWORKERS UNION IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG, STEINKUEHLER, AND THE CHIEF NEGOTIATOR FOR THE REGIONAL EMPLOYERS' BARGAINING TEAM, DUERR, AGREED THAT THE COMPLEX NATURE OF THE ISSUE -- I.E., FAR-REACHING PROTECTION FOR WORKERS AGAINST THE LOSS OF THEIR JOBS AND EARNINGS IN THE CASE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES -- MAKES A SETTLEMENT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, BUT, NEVERTHELESS, THEY SAW HOPEFUL SIGNS FOR A COMPROMISE.

2. WHILE STEINKUEHLER INDICATED THAT A 5.3 PERCENT PAY INCREASE AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER A CONCILIATION PROPOSAL FOR THE LOWER SAXONY METAL INDUSTRY COULD BE A MODEL ALSO FOR BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG, DUERR SAID THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS UNACCEPTABLE FOR THE EMPLOYERS, THUS FOLLOWING THE LINE SET BY THE NATIONAL METAL EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION "GESAMTMETALL".

3. THE METALWORKERS UNION HAS EXTENDED THE STRIKE TO SOME MORE METAL MANUFACTURING PLANTS IN THE MANN-
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PAGE 03 BONN 05722 301647Z

HEIM AREA EMPLOYING OVER 5,000 WORKERS. OVER 90,000 WORKERS IN NORTH BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ARE NOW IDLED BY STRIKE. THE EMPLOYER-SPONSORED LOCKOUTS STILL AFFECT AN ADDITIONAL 141,000 WORKERS. ANY COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT ACHIEVED IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE SUBJECT TO A NEW UNION REFERENDUM AMONG THE ORGANIZED WORKERS. SINCE PREPARATIONS FOR SUCH A REFERENDUM ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE ABOUT THREE DAYS AFTER ANY SETTLEMENT IS REACHED, THE STRIKE IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE INTO AT LEAST PART OF NEXT WEEK.

4. THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG REGIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (DGB) HAS CALLED UPON ITS MEMBERSHIP TO PARTICIPATE IN MASS RALLIES IN 29 CITIES THROUGHOUT BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ON MARCH 30 TO DEMONSTRATE UNION SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRIKING METALWORKERS. THE MAIN SPEAKER AT THE STUTTGART RALLY WILL BE THE DGB'S REGIONAL DIRECTOR, LOTHAR ZIMMERMANN. PROTESTS WILL BE AIMED AT THE EMPLOYERS' RIGHT TO LOCK OUT WORKERS. THE METALWORKERS UNION HAS CALLED UPON ITS MEMBERS AFFECTED BY LOCKOUTS TO

LODGE INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE LOCKOUT WITH
THE COMPETENT LABOR COURTS.
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